

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 08774 011502Z

43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 AID-20 SCS-03 SCA-01

PPT-02 JUSE-00 EUR-25 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1624

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, CASC, NI

SUBJECT: ZAPATA VISITORS LEAVE NIGERIA

REF: LAGOS 8640

1. NIGERIA POLICE RETURNED PASSPORTS OCTOBER 30 TO AMCITS LANG HOFFMAN AND SAMUEL DENNY, ZAPATA DRILLING COMPANY EXECUTIVES FROM HOUSTON AND LONDON RESPECTIVELY, WHO HAVE BEEN PREVENTED FROM LEAVING NIGERIA SINCE OCTOBER 20. HOFFMAN DEPARTED SAME DAY HIS PASSPORT RETURNED, AND DENNY PLANNING DEPART OCTOBER 31. NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE ALSO ISSUED WORK PERMITS TO THE GROUP OF ZAPATA DRILLING CREW MEMBERS (REFTEL PARA 2B) STANDING BY IN WARRI.

2. IN REPORTING THESE EVENTS TO EMBASSY, THE MANAGER OF ONSHORE SERVICES (ZAPATA'S NIGERIAN AFFILIATE) SAID ONE ZAPATA RIG STILL UNDERMANNED, BUT WORK IS GENERALLY GETTING BACK TO NORMAL. HE SPOKE ON TELEPHONE AND DID NOT OFFER ANY NEW OR ADDITIONAL COMMENT ON DIFFICULTIES ZAPATA HAS EXPERIENCED IN RECENT WEEKS.

3. EMBASSY HAS HEARD THAT ONE OR MORE ADDITIONAL US OIL SERVICE FIRMS BASED IN WARRI HAVE RECENTLY BEEN INSPECTED BY FMG IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES. WE DO NOT KNOW IF AUTHORITIES'

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 08774 011502Z

INCREASED ZEAL IS THE CAUSE OR THE RESULT OF THE ZAPATA

AFFAIR, BUT LAGOS OIL INDUSTRY RUMOR CIRCUIT IS CURRENTLY
CIRCULATING ALLEGATIONS OF OFFICIAL "HARASSMENT," AND ZAPATA
APPARENTLY THE CAUSE CELEBRE. THE LAGOS PROCEEDINGS
AGAINST ZAPATA RECEIVED LOCAL NEWSPAPER PUBLICITY, AND THE
FIRM'S IMMIGRATION PROBLEMS IN WARRI HAVE ALSO BECOME COMMON
KNOWLEDGE AMONG EXPATRIATE OILMEN.
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